

Please amend page 22, line 1 as follows:

Claims What is claimed is:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A particle comprising a core of the metallic element tungsten optionally together with other metallic elements wherein said core is coated with a coating layer.
2. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in claim 1 ~~of a~~ wherein the diameter is in the range of about 1.5 to about 20 nm.
3. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~claims 1 and 2~~ claim 1 ~~of a~~ wherein the diameter is in the range of 1.5 to 15 nm.
4. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 ~~of a~~ wherein the diameter is in the range of 1.5 to 7 nm.
5. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1 ~~of a~~ wherein the diameter is in the range of 2 to 6 nm.
6. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the core of the particle has a tungsten content of 20 to 100 weight % of metallic tungsten.
7. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the core of the particle has a tungsten content of 50 to 100 weight % of metallic tungsten.

8. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the core of the particle has a tungsten content of 85 to 100 weight % of metallic tungsten.

9. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the core of the particle has a tungsten content of 95 to 100 weight % of metallic tungsten.

10. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the core of the particles has a tungsten content of about 100 weight % of metallic tungsten.

11. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the core of the particle comprises metallic tungsten and one or more of the elements rhenium, iridium, niobium, tantalum or molybdenum in their metallic form.

12. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the coating layer comprises a charged coating layer.

13. (Original) A particle as claimed in claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer provides a net positive or negative charge at the pH of the environment where the particle is administered.

14. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 13~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer provides a negative charge at the pH of the environment where the particle is administered.

15. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 14~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer provides the net negative charge of acidic groups such as carboxylic acid groups, sulphonic acid groups, phosphoric acid groups and acidic heterocyclic groups.

16. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~claims 12 to 13~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer provides the net positive charge of basic amino, amidine, guanidine, quaternary ammonium and phosphonium groups.

17. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 16~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer comprises up to 50 charges per particle.

18. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 17~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer comprises up to 40 charges per particle.

19. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 18~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer comprises up to 25 charges per particle.

20. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 19~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer comprises at least 8 charges per particle.

21. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 20~~ claim 12 wherein the charged coating layer comprises at least 4 charges per particle.

22. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 12 to 21~~ claim 12 wherein the layer comprises a polymeric layer with charged groups.

23. (Original) A particle as claimed in claim 22 wherein the polymeric layer comprises a hydrophilic polymer.

24. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 22 to 23~~ claim 22 wherein the polymer polymeric layer comprises a homopolymer.

25. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 22 to 24~~ claim 22 wherein the polymer polymeric layer comprises a copolymer.

26. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 22 to 25~~ claim 22 wherein the polymer polymeric layer is formed from acrylic acid monomers.

27. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 22 to 26~~ claim 22 wherein the polymer polymeric layer is formed from at least one monomer containing a charged group.

28. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 22 to 27~~ claim 22 wherein the polymer polymeric layer is formed from at least one neutral monomer.

29. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 22 to 28~~ claim 22 wherein the molar ratio between the neutral monomer and the charged monomer ~~as is~~ below 20:1.

30. (Original) A particle as claimed in claim 29 wherein the molar ratio between the neutral monomer and the charged monomer is between 10:1 and 10:1.5.

31. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1 wherein the layer comprises a monomeric layer.

32. (Original) A particle as claimed in claim 31 wherein the monomeric layer comprises a hydrophilic monomeric layer.

33. (Original) A particle as claimed in claim 32 wherein said hydrophilic layer comprises at least a fraction of molecules that are hydrophilic.

34. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the claims 31 and 32~~ claim 31 wherein said hydrophilic layer comprises molecules that each has at least one hydrophilic group.

35. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of the claims 1 to 11 and 31 and 32~~ claim 1 wherein said core is coated with a mono-layer coating.

36. (Original) A particle as claimed in claim 35 wherein said mono-layer coating comprises compounds of formula $A_n-L_o-M_p$, where A is one or more tungsten coordinating groups, L is absent or is one or more linking groups and M is one or more hydrophilic groups, n and p are positive integers and o is zero or a positive integer.

37. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in ~~any of claims 31 to 36~~ claim 31 wherein the monomeric layer comprises a charged coating layer.

38. (Currently amended) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer ~~comprises the charged groups of claims 13 to 21~~ provides a net positive or negative charge at the pH of the environment where the particle is administered.

39. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical comprising particles of ~~the preceding claims~~ claim 1 optionally together with a pharmaceutically acceptable solvent or excipient.

40. (Currently amended) A diagnostic agent comprising particle as claimed in ~~claims 1-38~~ claim 1 optionally together with a solvent or excipient.

41. (Currently amended) An X-ray contrast agent comprising a particle as claimed in ~~claims 1-38~~ claim 1 optionally together with a solvent or excipient.

42. (Currently amended) ~~Use of particles of claims 1 to 38~~ A particle as claimed in claim 1 wherein the particle comprises as in vivo contrast agents.

43. (Currently amended) ~~Use of particles of claims 1 to 38~~ A particle as claimed in claim 1 wherein the particle comprises as X-ray contrast agents.

44. (Currently amended) A method of diagnosis comprising administration of particles of ~~claims 1 to 38~~ claim 1 to a human or animal body, examining the body with a diagnostic device and compiling data from the examination.

45. (Currently amended) A method of imaging, specifically X-ray imaging comprising administration of particles of ~~claims 1 to 38~~ claim 1 to a human or animal body, imaging the body with an imaging device, compiling data from the examination and optionally analysing the data.

46. (Currently amended) A process for the preparation of particles of ~~claims 1 to 30~~ claim 1 comprising decomposing a source of tungsten (0) in a high boiling, dried and deoxygenated solvent in the presence of one or more monomers and thereby effecting a thermally induced polymerization of the monomers.

47. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 46 wherein the source of tungsten (0) is tungsten hexacarbonyl (W(CO)₆).

48. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~claims 46 and 47~~ claim 46 wherein the solvent comprises di- and triglyme, diphenyl ether, trialkyl phosphine oxide and trialkyl phosphine.

49. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 48 wherein the solvent comprises trioctyl phosphine oxide and trioctyl phosphine.

50. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~claims 46 to 49~~ claim 46 wherein the high boiling, dried and deoxygenated solvent further comprises a fraction of a lower boiling solvent.

51. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 50 wherein the fraction of a lower boiling solvent comprises between 5 to 15 volume% of cyclooctane and/or n-heptane.

52. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~claims 46 to 51~~ claim 46 further comprising work –up of the formed particles from a low-boiling alkane, specifically from pentane.

53. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~claims 46 to 52~~ claim 46 wherein one or more of the monomers comprises silylether-protected polar groups and where the protecting groups are cleaved off in aqueous solution to yield hydrophilic polymer coated particles.

54. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer provides a negative charge at the pH of the environment where the particle is administered.

55. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer provides the net negative charge of acidic groups such as carboxylic acid groups, sulphonic acid groups, phosphoric acid groups and acidic heterocyclic groups.

56. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer provides the net positive charge of basic amino, amidine, guanidine, quaternary ammonium and phosphonium groups.

57. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer comprises up to 50 charges per particle.

58. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer comprises up to 40 charges per particle.

59. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer comprises up to 25 charges per particle.

60. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer comprises at least 8 charges per particle.

61. (New) A particle as claimed in claim 37 wherein the charged coating layer comprises at least 4 charges per particle.